

## JAPAN MAKES ITS NAVY PLANS FOR "DEFENSIVE WAR"—SIMMS

By WILLIAM PHILIP SIMMS.  
(Written expressly for The Newspaper Enterprise Association.)

TOKYO, April 16.—If the United States stops building vessels at the end of her present program—that is, in 1922—and Japan continues with her eight-eight-and-eight schedule until 1927—as Premier Takashi Hara and Admiral Baron Kato, minister of the navy, insist she must do—then the United States, in the event of war with Japan, would be caught at approximately a two-to-one disadvantage.

That is to say if Japan fights the kind of war she seems to be building for—a "defensive" war, or more properly speaking a war to be fought in her own yard, so to speak—a Japanese navy equal in size to the American navy would be tantamount to a Japanese navy of twice the size of the American navy under actual fighting conditions. Nor does it take an expert to see this.

Personally, since my arrival in Japan, I have become convinced that war between the United States and Japan is entirely unnecessary. If President Harding and Secretary of State Hughes blend justice, strength and publicity in their dealings with Japan, there will be no war.

But should the worst come to the worst the chances of Japan attacking the continental United States, or striking the American fleet in American waters, are so remote as to be negligible. The attitude of Japan towards the

United States would rather be, in a given emergency: "Come over and help yourself." Now supposing something like that happened. Look at your map. San Francisco to Yokohama, via Honolulu, is 2,655 miles—two weeks' sailing across the Pacific ocean.

### Would Arrive Tired.

From Honolulu, in the Hawaiian Islands the last point at which American ships could with certainty stock up with fuel to Yokohama is more than 7,000 miles, so a tired fleet, far from home, would have to meet fresh fleet in its own waters.

A line of communication nearly 7,000 miles long would have to be maintained requiring a considerable number of the available ships, and any deviation from the direct routes across the Pacific would not only lengthen this line but expose a long flank to the enemy.

The waters of the Philippines, at best, would be teeming with enemy submarines, making them extremely hazardous for any ship using those ports, while at worst the island might be cut off entirely by hostile fleets, leaving the Hawaiian Islands as the nearest possible base.

An American vessel receiving what would otherwise amount to a small injury would be out of commission for the duration of the war, for it would have to travel at least 3,000 miles, if not 4,000 miles across the Pacific to go into dry dock for repairs.

Only a few seaplanes could be flown,

as even when the new American seaplane carrying vessels are commissioned their capacity will be very limited when compared to the number which any nation, operating from shore, could use against them. And launching a plane from the deck of a ship is always a precarious undertaking, even in the best of weather, not to speak of returning to the ship when anything like a sea is running.

These are only a few of the items considered by experts when the estimate a fleet is up to only approximately 50 per cent its real efficiency when forced to meet an enemy in its own waters 3,000 to 7,000 miles distant.

Everyone out here insists that if Japan must fight the United States, she will fight a "defensive war," waiting for the United States to come to her—the logical thing, seemingly for Japan to do.

Another thing that one hears out here is that if there is to be a clash with America it must come over conflicting policies in the Far East, for, appearances to the contrary, Japan has no intention of attacking the coast of the United States over the immigration question.

Should trouble come between the two countries over some Far Eastern question, the conflict would naturally be staged in the Far East, and it would be there that victory or defeat would be decided.

Japan's battle plans, under such circumstances, are of course unknown to the writer, and probably to all others, save the Japanese general staff, but a glance at any map will show quite plainly the advantages, natural and otherwise, which would be hers.

From Kamchatka almost to Hong

Kong, China stretches a chain composed of thousands of islands, little and big. These islands form a wall shutting off the continent of Asia from the Pacific ocean. The passages between these islands are often very narrow and nowhere is the water deep, for a ridge of land runs along, underneath the water, the entire distance. With mines in the passages, and a guard composed of destroyers, submarines and light cruisers, breaking a passage through would be a dangerous and difficult feat.

Another thing: These islands are so placed geographically that they form three independent, though interlocking, "safety zones," comparable to water-tight compartments in a ship where one may fill with out damage to the others.

Three Safety Zones.

The first "zone" is formed by the islands beginning at the southern extremity of Kamchatka, jutting off from the Siberian mainland, and running down to Hokkaido, one of the largest of the Japanese group. The narrow waterway between Hokkaido and Asia is almost completely blocked by the island of Saghalien so that this chain of islands might be forced without endangering in the slightest Japan's hold on the Sea of Japan or the Yellow Sea.

The second "zone" is protected by Saghalien, Hokkaido and Japan proper, which with the islands in the strait separating Japan from Korea, form a perfect blockade against an enemy approaching from the Pacific or from the north or south.

"Zone" No. 3 is formed by the island of Kyushu, Formosa and the intervening group.

Given her position on the mainland,

in Siberia, at the mouth of the Amur river, in Korea, Manchuria and Shantung, Japan is in a well-nigh perfect position to engage in what she calls a "defensive" war, and any nation which lightly undertakes to attack this particular nut would find it had taken over a man's size job before finishing with it.

Japan Wants No War.

The progressive element in Japan, however, wants no war, either offensive or defensive. The progressives are numerous and on the increase and are made up largely of business men, bankers and others who have traveled and had the opportunity of studying world conditions abroad. The younger crowd of intellectuals, particularly the students, are opposed to war. All these want an equal chance with other na-

tionalities in China and Asia generally, and, because of their proximity to the market, their capacity for large and cheap production and similar advantages, get their share of Asia's trade. Through this trade with Asia they in fact prosper as never before and the military budget, now nearly half the total annual expenditures, can be cut to a minimum, and the nation's education, now sadly neglected, attended to.

Unless an agreement on a general reduction of armaments can be arrived at between the Great Powers, including Japan, there is no way in which America can help the progressives of Japan more than by convincing Japanese militarists that war would be too costly, no matter what the outcome. And the only way to convince them

is by having a navy second to none and trained to the minute. Such a navy, seems to me here on the outpost as the one guaranty of peace because it would convince all comers, before trouble began, that trouble wouldn't pay.

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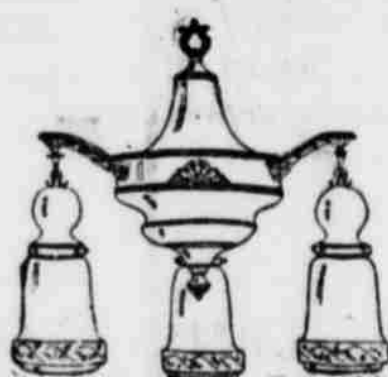
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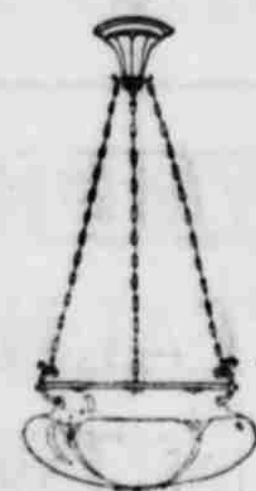
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